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Chairman: Mr. Busacca ..... (Italy)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 102: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/C.3/52/L.2, L.10, L.11, L.12 and L.13)

Introduction of draft resolutions

Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.2: International Year of Older Persons: towards a society for all ages

1. **Ms. FLOR** (Germany) introduced the amendments proposed by her delegation and the delegations of Spain and the Dominican Republic to draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.2, as contained in document A/C.3/52/L.10. The amendments reflected two new factors which had emerged since the initial text of the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council had been approved in March 1997. Firstly, progress had been made in the preparations for the International Year of Older Persons in 1999, and the Secretary-General had defined the operational framework for the Year (A/52/328). Secondly, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, together with the American Association of Retired Persons and non-governmental organizations, had decided to hold a worldwide poster competition for the Year.

Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.11: Education for all

2. **Ms. Nyamsuren** (Mongolia) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.11, the sponsors of which had been joined by Belgium, Canada, France, Greece, Guinea, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Portugal and Spain. As a result of a technical error, paragraph 7 of the text had been omitted. The following paragraph should therefore be inserted after paragraph 6, and the following paragraphs renumbered:

> "7. Appeals anew to Governments and to economic and financial organizations and institutions, both national and international, to lend greater financial and material support to the efforts to increase literacy and achieve education for all."

Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.12: Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: towards a society for all in the twenty-first century

3. **Ms. Ramiro-Lopez** (Philippines) announced that Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, China, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Japan, Malaysia, Monaco, Myanmar, the Netherlands and San Marino had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.12. She introduced the proposed text.

Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.13: Policies and programmes involving youth

4. **Ms. Van Houte** (Netherlands) announced that Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Ghana, San Marino, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Sweden had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.13. Following informal consultations, certain revisions had been made to the draft resolution. In paragraph 7, "at its second and third sessions" should be replaced by "at its second session". The following new paragraph should be inserted after that paragraph:

> "Notes with interest that the outcome of the first session of the World Youth Forum will be presented at the World Conference."

In the current paragraph 8, the words "to include" should be replaced by "to consider including". She then introduced the various provisions of the draft text.

Agenda item 103: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/52/3, 295, 327, 357 and 413, A/52/447-E/1997/775 and A/C.3/52/L.4-L.8)

Agenda item 104: International drug control (*continued*) (A/52/3, 127, 296, 336 and 413, A/52/447-E/1997/775 and E/1997/48)

5. **Ms. Arystanbekova** (Kazakhstan), speaking also on behalf of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan, said that drug addiction was one of the most serious problems facing the world. Given the extent of the scourge, the international community should take prompt, concerted measures to put an end to it. The United Nations had a prominent role to play in coordinating those measures.

6. The countries on whose behalf she was speaking supported the action taken by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to strengthen cooperation in combating the abuse of narcotic drugs, particularly with regard to the confiscation of revenue from drug-dealing, the repression of money-laundering, reducing demand and controlling precursors, as well as the action it had taken to encourage States to accede to the relevant conventions. Also welcome were the results of the work carried out by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its fortieth session and in preparation for the special session that the General Assembly would be devoting to the fight against the production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities.

7. The drug scourge had not spared the countries on whose behalf she was speaking, and they had therefore decided to take various measures, including at the political and legislative levels. In 1996 they had adopted a programme, which would run until the year 2000, against organized crime and other forms of crime, including those linked to drugs. The programme would be completed by inter-State conventions, which were on the point of being concluded and which would strengthen cooperation in efforts to combat trafficking in narcotic drugs and pyschotropic substances. Provisions to that effect had already been adopted at the regional level, thanks to close cooperation with the United Nations — notably in the signing of a memorandum of agreement against drug trafficking and drug addiction between the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and Kazakhstan, Krygyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In October 1992 an agreement to cooperate in the fight against drugs had been concluded between the various countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States; in 1994 an agreement on cooperation had also been reached by the customs authorities in several countries, and in March 1997 an agreement on the exchange of information to combat organized crime, terrorism and drug trafficking had been signed in Kiev by various specialized national agencies. Further agreements were being drawn up.

8. As the exchange of information was a vital factor in combating drug abuse, the eight countries on whose behalf she was speaking had taken steps to strengthen cooperation in that area between the specialized services and law enforcement bodies, and they had set up a data bank on drug traffickers and their activities, which also contained statistical data giving insights into the nature of trafficking and making it possible to formulate strategies to combat it. They had also conducted large-scale joint operations against traffickers. In the belief that the lessons they had drawn from their activities could be of use to other States, they were prepared to make them available to the United Nations and all Member States so that they could unite in their efforts to overcome that problem.

9. **Mr. Oda** (Egypt) said that drug abuse and drug trafficking were one of the most serious problems faced by the international community and one that had a major impact on economic and social development. States should therefore coordinate their efforts to tackle the problem in all its dimensions and protect young people throughout the world from that scourge. Egypt followed with great interest the work of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), which sought to coordinate the activities of the different United Nations agencies and monitored the implementation of United Nations resolutions as part of a concerted strategy.

10. The Egyptian delegation took note with approval of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session (A/52/296). In the fight against narcotic drugs, emphasis should be placed on preventive measures and education and on the treatment and social reintegration of drug addicts. It was also important to strengthen the international exchange of information and to provide developing countries with the financial resources and technical assistance which they needed to deal with the drug problem. Egypt urged all States to fully implement the provisions of international instruments, in particular the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, and to submit regular reports to UNDCP on the action being taken in that area.

11. The Egyptian authorities had taken measures to ensure more effective control within the national territory over the sale of the chemical substances used in the illicit production of drugs and to fight against money laundering and crime related to the traffic in narcotic drugs. They had also expanded the powers of the council chaired by the Prime Minister which had been established in 1986 to combat drug abuse. Concerned by the social consequences of the drug problem, the Egyptian Government had also taken steps to ensure that drug addicts who themselves requested treatment would benefit from social welfare services, together with the families of individuals convicted for drug trafficking. At the regional and international levels, the Egyptian Government actively supported the strategy of the United Nations to provide appropriate training to those responsible for the fight against drugs in Arab and African countries. It exchanged information with drug control agencies in all countries, and particularly in the Middle East and Africa.

12. It was important to make adequate preparations for the special session of the General Assembly called to consider the question of international cooperation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities. The Egyptian delegation would make every effort to contribute to the success of the session. It also wished to invite international financial institutions and donors to provide the necessary funds to implement drug control programmes, on the understanding that such donations would not result in a reduction of the resources allocated to development activities or give rise to interference in the internal affairs of beneficiary States.

13. **Mr. Saleh** (Bahrain) said that one of the great paradoxes of the times was that the scientific and technical progress achieved in all fields could be placed at the service of criminal enterprises. For example, the development of communications and transport encouraged consumption and traffic in narcotic drugs, a scourge which was so destructive that the international community must redouble its efforts to eradicate or at least to contain it. Bahrain welcomed the vigorous efforts being made by the United Nations in that field and the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly which would be held in 1998 to consider the question of drugs.

14. In order to protect its population, and in particular its young people, who were usually the ones most affected, Bahrain was doing everything possible to fight against drug trafficking in its territory. Thanks to cooperation between various ministries, it had been possible to establish in the psychiatric hospital a specialized clinic, which was the only one equipped to treat drug addicts, in order to more effectively contain the problem. The clinic organized conferences in schools to increase pupils' awareness of the seriousness of the problem and of ways of preventing it. Activities were also carried out in conjunction with local associations and national clubs. The clinic had also found jobs for unemployed drug addicts. In addition, the audio-visual and written press promoted greater awareness of the problem and dangers of drug addiction from the cultural and medical perspectives. Finally, legislation had been amended: the penalties provided for drug traffickers were currently capital punishment and life imprisonment.

15. Bahrain coordinated its activities with other member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council. A draft criminal code common to the six member States had thus been elaborated. Based on the principles of the Shariah, the draft code guaranteed social protection for all citizens and facilitated the coordination of efforts to gather evidence and to strengthen international cooperation. Moreover, those responsible for the fight against drug trafficking in the different member States met periodically and scientific cooperation programmes were elaborated in order to deal even more effectively with the problem. It was only through international cooperation that efforts to put an end to drug trafficking could succeed.

16. **Mr. Taunay** (Brazil) said that his delegation fully subscribed to the statement made under agenda item 103 by the representative of Paraguay on behalf of the Rio Group. Brazil placed greater emphasis on the prevention of crime than on punishment and the reintegration of criminals into society had been one of the key elements in its approach to crime. Recently, for example, the Brazilian Congress had adopted new legislation that provided heavier penalties than previously for the unlawful possession of weapons, which could now result in prison terms of up to two years, as compared with 6 months previously, and which forbade the carrying of weapons. The Government had also taken significant steps to strengthen the administration of justice and the penitentiary system and had adopted the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, whose application was being closely monitored through the National Council of Criminal and Penitentiary Policies, an independent body.

17. International technical assistance was very important in the fight against crime and Brazil was pleased to see that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had approved at its sixth session a draft resolution aimed at strengthening such assistance. Organized transnational crime had increased to the point where it constituted a permanent threat to all democracies. In order to more effectively combat organized crime, Brazil had taken steps to modernize certain laws, ensure greater coordination between police organizations, strengthen certain police administrations and increase its cooperation with other countries.

18. Brazil attached great importance to the fight against narcotic drugs. To that end, it had adopted a national anti-drug programme — which had attained nearly all of its objectives — as well as norms for the control and inspection of chemical precursors. It welcomed the cooperation which it had received from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and urged the international community to provide the Programme with adequate resources to meet its growing challenges.

19. Brazil had also concluded new bilateral agreements. In particular, a unified command for police activities in the frontier regions between Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay had been created. It had signed in July 1997 a cooperation agreement with the Governments of the community of Portuguese-speaking countries and had participated in the anti-drug initiative launched by the countries of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic. Brazil looked forward to participating actively in the special session of the General Assembly to be held in 1998 to consider drug-related issues.

20. In recent years, Brazil and other countries had witnessed a proliferation of private bodies whose activities were aimed at the prevention of drug abuse and the rehabilitation of drug addicts. Their action had contributed to a change in mentalities and attitudes had helped the competent public institutions to more effectively discharge their responsibilities. Brazil hoped that the international

community would draw inspiration from their example in the face of drug-related problems and that it would deal with such problems in a comprehensive and coordinated way.

21. **Mr. Najem** (Lebanon) said that drug use and trafficking were an international scourge that could be eradicated only by the efforts of the whole international community, particularly the United Nations. Despite the long years of war in Lebanon, his Government had spared no efforts in its fight against the crimes of drug production and trafficking, and had always been actively involved in the work of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). It had acceded to all the international conventions against drugs and was implementing them in full. In recent years, all illicit crops in the country had been destroyed, as observed by the various international missions dispatched there. Farmers had therefore been induced to seek a new livelihood. His Government had requested the aid of UNDCP and the United Nations Development Programme, and a rural development plan for the Baalbek region had been adopted at a conference held in Paris in 1995. He hoped that the countries affected by the problem of drug addiction would provide Lebanon with the necessary material assistance to establish an alternative economy in regions where drugs had once been the main source of income, and to set up rehabilitation programmes for drug addicts. He was looking forward to the special session of the General Assembly on the question of narcotic drugs, and called for more efforts to rid the world of that affliction, which affected all aspects of life and society.

22. **Mr. Ajlaan** (Saudi Arabia) said that drug abuse was a latter-day plague that affected the whole of the international community. His Government considered the phenomenon to be a more serious threat than weapons, and wished to protect Islamic society in Saudi Arabia from it and to maintain the quality of life of its citizens. It had therefore taken steps to restrict outbreaks of that plague, including by signing many international conventions and bilateral agreements dealing with the spread of psychotropic substances and by passing laws to suppress drug trafficking and provide treatment to addicts.

23. However, such efforts could not be successful unless there was proper coordination between specialized bodies as well as cooperation between States, particularly those which had had some success in combating drug abuse. At the same time, it was in the interest of individuals, the family and society to help the victims, notably by making care available to them and setting up specialized hospitals.

24. Although the standard of living in the rich countries allowed the evil of drugs to flourish, wealth or poverty were not the determining factors. Religion and faith were the best defence. Saudi Arabia followed the Shariah, which forbade anyone from taking substances that might be harmful to either mental or physical health, and promoted social and cultural education, as personal growth was essential.

25. It was necessary to find solutions to the many conflicts which divided the world and which were too often exploited by the traffickers, and to strengthen international cooperation. Only in that way would it be possible to create a world that was more just and in which dialogue and tolerance prevailed.

26. **Mr. Melenevsky** (Ukraine), speaking also on behalf of the Republic of Moldova, said that the financial problems associated with combating drug abuse were felt all the more keenly by the new democracies since they faced difficulties in their economic and social development and had become the favoured targets of the multinational drug traffickers. UNDCP could perhaps, therefore, offer them greater help to implement their educational, treatment and rehabilitation programmes.

27. The Governments of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine were fully aware of their responsibilities, and spared no effort in their action to combat drug abuse. They had brought their legislation into line with international norms, passed laws which carried severe sentences for the production, excessive use and trafficking of psychotropic substances and for the production of precursors, taken practical steps and created new instruments. They had also signed several intergovernmental and inter-agency agreements, and increased bilateral cooperation by taking various steps to suppress drug trafficking on their common border and to prevent drug-related money-laundering in their territories.

28. The work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which coordinated international action against drug abuse, was very valuable. At its fortieth session, the Commission had rightly emphasized the need to monitor carefully the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, and the Commission's balanced approach, making all States collectively responsible for combating drug abuse, facilitated comprehensive international cooperation.

29. He welcomed the decisions taken by UNDCP and the International Narcotics Control Board, which provided a fine example for States to follow. He also welcomed the call by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1995/16, for demand-reduction initiatives to be incorporated in a coherent strategy to combat drug abuse. It was the duty of every Government to control strictly narcotic drugs and precursors, attempt to maintain a balance between the supply

and demand for narcotic drugs used for medical or scientific purposes, and work to prevent the illicit production of narcotic drugs and their precursors. He also looked forward to the speedy completion of the draft declaration on the guiding principles of demand reduction, which would be one of the main achievements of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse 1991-2000.

30. As for trafficking in synthetic drugs, which was becoming particularly worrying, the work of the International Narcotics Control Board was greatly appreciated. Governments should indeed monitor more closely the chemicals used in the manufacture of those drugs and should set up mechanisms to collect data on the manufacture, trafficking and use of stimulants and their precursors. In that connection, he stressed the importance of Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/41.

31. Any liberalization of the manufacture and sale of narcotic drugs would inevitably aggravate the problems considerably. The use of methadone to treat drug addicts should therefore be resisted, a view shared to a large exient by the delegations at the fortieth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

32. As the battle against drug abuse was clearly so far from achieving the expected results, it would be necessary to review progress at the national and international levels, set new targets, develop new strategies, bring the relevant instruments up to date and improve coordination. He welcomed the decision to hold a special session of the General Assembly on the question of narcotic drugs in 1998; at that session, only a limited number of questions should be considered and practical solutions should be sought by discussing, in particular, whether improved exchanges of information between countries, using the latest telecommunication technologies, would allow more rapid progress.

33. **Mr. Amirkhizi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that no Government could hope to reduce on its own the threat posed by drug addiction and drug trafficking, and that all States should work to strengthen existing multilateral cooperation mechanisms. He therefore welcomed the decision by the General Assembly to hold a special session in 1998 on the question of drugs, and hoped that Member States would reaffirm their readiness to attack all aspects of drug trafficking, including related money-laundering, and take steps to reduce demand.

34. His Government had finalized the preparation of a national plan to reduce demand for drugs and was committed to preventing drug addiction in its territory. While it still considered substance abuse to be a crime, drug addicts could henceforth be treated in special public or private centres. However, he was deeply concerned that in some countries, illicit drugs were openly marketed, especially on the Internet, as a result of the liberalization of the non-medical use of substances which were nevertheless considered illicit under the relevant international conventions.

35. Recognizing the importance of multilateral cooperation in combating drug trafficking, the Islamic Republic had concluded several bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries to facilitate the exchange of information and cooperation in law enforcement, which had somewhat controlled drug trafficking in the region. The continuing conflict in Afghanistan had, however, become an acute problem in that regard, because some Afghan factions were financing their military activities with drug money. His Government had also made huge efforts to block the influx of illicit drugs into the country and their trans-shipment to Europe.

36. The Islamic Republic of Iran was strictly implementing the United Nations Convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances of 1988, to which it was a party, particularly article 3 (Offences and sanctions) and article 5 (Confiscation). The proceeds confiscated from drug traffickers were used for drug prevention programmes and the construction of fortifications along the borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was high time that the money-laundering countries, mostly in Europe, mended their ways and cooperated with the rest of the international community in combating such illicit proceeds.

37. The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), which was responsible for the follow-up and implementation of the relevant international treaties, had a vital role. Yet it was a matter of concern that certain States were resorting increasingly to one-sided qualifications of the drug policies of other States, a practice that should be firmly resisted because it could undermine the effectiveness of the multilateral instruments and mechanisms established for the purpose.

38. With regard to agenda item 103, his delegation was pleased that the report of the Secretary-General, "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform" (A/51/950) proposed enhancing the capacity of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division. It would not, however, favour a merger of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, for it believed that the two Commissions should remain separate, each with its own secretariat. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice would be called upon

to play a vital role if it became the policy-making body of the proposed Centre for International Crime Prevention.

39. His delegation thanked the Secretary-General for his detailed report on progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/63 (A/52/295). It was essential to come to the aid of the developing countries in their battle against transnational organized crime, if that battle was to be successful. Meanwhile, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division had only limited resources, enabling it simply to assess problems and help countries formulate projects. In other words, despite the increased attention and resources devoted by the United Nations to technical assistance, the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme was not always fully operational. Hence, his delegation called upon donor countries and international funding agencies to give regular financial support to technical assistance projects elaborated under the Programme.

40. **Mr. Reyes Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that despite the many efforts expended at the international and national levels to fight against the scourge of illicit drugs, it was only getting worse. Therefore, the convening of the special session of the General Assembly on the question of narcotic drugs would be a milestone. The hope was that its work would lead to true international cooperation, based on respect for the sovereignty of States and their territorial integrity, without recourse to force or the threat of force, and on shared responsibilities, taking into account all stages in the process from drug production to drug distribution, with all those involved in the struggle being on an equal footing. Cuba again condemned the unilateral steps taken by certain States who arrogated to themselves the role of arbiters of proper international conduct, even though they themselves bore a great responsibility for the worldwide drug problem. The United States, for instance, had more than 30 million drug addicts, and close to 500,000 children who smoked marijuana.

41. Cuba welcomed the role played by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), whose cooperation had enabled Cuba to train personnel for its anti-drug units and to set up the necessary material and technical support. UNDCP must preserve its identity and remain totally independent of other United Nations agencies, in particular of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division. With regard to the Division, it should be emphasized that any reorganization of the activities of the agencies located in Vienna should be subject to a decision by Member States. Crime prevention and criminal justice activities should not be reduced — as seemed to be the trend — to the sole question of law enforcement, to the detriment of other essential aspects of international cooperation in the field.

42. The only independent authority which could objectively evaluate efforts by States to contribute to a global drug control policy and to cooperate effectively among themselves was the INCB.

43. Although illicit drugs were not a social problem in Cuba, the country was taking part in international action. Its geographical situation could make of it a drug-trafficking zone and it had therefore concluded or was about to conclude agreements with quite a number of countries; it was prepared to consider with interested countries all the possibilities for cooperation in the field. Cuba had also acceded to all the international drug-control treaties.

44. **Mr. Diao Mingsheng** (China) said that the world was plagued by all types of criminal activities, and especially by organized transnational crime, which seriously jeopardized peace, political stability and economic and social development. The Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan had given impetus to the international community's efforts to combat organized crime, and his delegation supported the efforts undertaken by the United Nations in that regard. His Government itself had been actively implementing the Political Declaration and Global Action Plan by harmonizing its legislation with the international norms and revising its Penal Code. Concerted action by its law enforcement authorities and their foreign counterparts had already achieved remarkable results. China nevertheless wished to further strengthen its cooperation with other countries and international organizations to combat transnational crime and had four proposals to make in that regard.

45. First, a convention against organized transnational crime should be elaborated as soon as possible. There had been some progress in the preparatory work on such an instrument, and the Economic and Social Council had adopted a report on the matter. Such a convention should give full consideration to the economic, political and cultural backgrounds of different countries so that the greatest number could accede to it. Accordingly, the opinions of all sides should, to the extent possible, be taken into account and consultations should proceed as soon as possible.

46. Moreover, the United Nations should play a larger role in providing specialized information and advice to Member States. It should also consider establishing a mechanism for coordination among Member States and increasing the resources allocated to crime prevention and combating organized transnational crime.

47. Also, it must increase technical assistance in the field to developing countries, as their economic and technological situations did not allow them to deal appropriately with the threat from organized transnational crime.

48. Exchanges and cooperation between countries in the area of extradition and other matters relating to criminal justice should be strengthened so that each State could contribute to the control and prevention of organized transnational crime.

49. **Mr. Donokusumo** (Indonesia) welcomed the expansion of the operational capacity of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and the increase in technical assistance projects in that area. However, his delegation regretted that financial problems had been hindering those activities and called on donor countries and international funding agencies to contribute in order to alleviate them.

50. His delegation also welcomed the technical cooperation activities carried out jointly under the global programme against money-laundering by the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). It further welcomed the progress made in preparing for the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which was to take place in 2000. While approving the four substantive topics on the provisional agenda for the Congress, and the overall structure of the Congress, he emphasized that the work and recommendations of the Congress must be practical and specific. In that connection, it might be useful for the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to help countries with their preparations for the Congress.

51. In terms of the follow-up to the implementation of the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan against Organized Transnational Crime, it would be appropriate to set up an intergovernmental group of experts to elaborate a draft convention against organized transnational crime; the draft convention might usefully contain provisions on subjects such as trafficking in children.

52. His delegation welcomed the progress made towards the establishment, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/27, of a central repository. The Secretary-General should be requested to undertake a comparative study of organized transnational crime.

53. Indonesia fully supported measures taken under United Nations auspices to improve the regulation of firearms, which were responsible for too many deaths, and looked forward to the publication of the manual and the results of the survey on that issue.

54. It also welcomed the measures being taken by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to combat violence against women. That problem required the attention of all Member States, and the Economic and Social Council should consider the issue at a high-level segment of one of its forthcoming sessions.

55. While supporting the Secretary-General's efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, his delegation wondered if it was really advisable to merge the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, whose mandates were quite distinct, even if some of their areas of interest were the same.

56. Transnational crime was a growing problem that must be solved through partnership and cooperation.

57. **Mr. Cho Chang Beom** (Republic of Korea) said that substantial progress had been made in implementing the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme. However, he was concerned that criminal elements were taking advantage of rapid technological progress and globalization to engage in activities that were more and more likely to undermine political stability, democracy and economic development in the developing countries and also in the countries with economies in transition. The international community must therefore put in place a mechanism capable of combating those machinations, and his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to strengthen the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division and transform it into the Centre for International Crime Prevention.

58. Priority goals should be identified in the light of current budgetary restrictions: by focusing on specific goals, the limited resources could be optimized. Combating organized transnational crime should be an absolute priority; comprehensive strategies were already in place, specifically in the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan, and the international community was broadly in favour of elaborating a global legal framework in that area.

59. Turning to agenda item 104, he noted that the Global Programme of Action was a useful framework for international cooperation against drug abuse and illicit trafficking that favoured a balanced approach and shared responsibility. However, much remained to be done at the national, regional and international levels. In particular, more active participation by non-governmental organizations and civil society should be encouraged.

60. The special session of the General Assembly in June 1998 should allow Member States to tackle all aspects of the drug problem, commit themselves fully to combating the proliferation of drugs, and adopt appropriate strategies and methods to address new trends such as the illicit manufacture, trafficking and use of amphetamine-type stimulants. Preparatory work had already been done on issues such as combating the illicit manufacture and trafficking of stimulants and their precursors, judicial cooperation, combating money-laundering, and elaborating guiding principles of drug demand reduction. The issue of substitute crops should also be seriously examined.

61. His delegation hoped that the special session would result in a substantial increase in the financial resources available to UNDCP. Increased funding, the assets confiscated from drug traffickers and the introduction of a cost-sharing mechanism for technical assistance might also help UNDCP overcome its financial difficulties. In 1997, the Government had doubled its voluntary contribution to UNDCP.

62. **Mr. Arlacchi** (Executive Director of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention) announced that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan had provided detailed information about the opium crop in his country, saying that opium production, consumption and trafficking were prohibited in all areas controlled by the Taliban. Prohibition of opium poppy cultivation had been the condition set by the United Nations for putting in place a crop-substitution programme. Important progress had thus been made, after six months of negotiation — which had also made it possible to set up a course giving training in the law and its application — particularly since Afghanistan produced 50 per cent of the world's opium and 80 per cent of the opium processed into heroin.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.